

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus comprising:

a collection unit which collects contents, to be evaluated, posted on a web page via a network at a predetermined timing; and

a reliability control unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, depending on whether or not it is possible for the collection unit to collect the contents to be evaluated.

2. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

an acquisition unit which acquires a search conditional statement from a user;

a search unit which searches contents matching the acquired search conditional statement; and

a reliability presenting unit which presents to the user a degree of reliability of the searched contents.

3. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 2, further comprising a prediction unit which predicts the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, based on an element contributed to estimating a duration of contents contained in the

contents to be evaluated,

wherein the reliability presenting unit presents the predicted reliability to the user.

4. An information search provision apparatus according to any of Claims 1-3, wherein the reliability control unit gradually increases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, in a period of time during which the contents to be evaluated is acquired continuously at a predetermined timing by the collection unit.

5. An information search provision apparatus according to any of Claims 1-4, further comprising a history increase range controlling unit which controls an increase range in the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to a history on whether or not it is possible for the collection unit to collect the contents to be evaluated.

6. An information search provision apparatus according to any of Claims 1-5, further comprising a relationship determining unit which determines the presence or absence of a relationship between highly reliable contents and the contents to be evaluated,

wherein the reliability control unit controls in a manner that an increase range of the contents to be evaluated when the presence of a relation is determined by the relationship determining unit is set higher than that when the absence thereof

is determined.

7. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein, based on whether or not related information indicative of the presence of a relationship between highly reliable contents and the contents to be evaluated is contained in the highly reliable contents, the relationship determining unit determines the presence or absence of a relationship between highly reliable contents and the contents to be evaluated.

8. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus comprising:

- a collection unit which collects contents, to be evaluated, posted on a web page via a network at a predetermined timing;

- a comparison unit which compares the collected contents to be evaluated with next collected contents, to be evaluated, posted on the same web page;

- an update determining unit which determines if the contents to be evaluated has been updated or not, based on a result of the comparison; and

- a reliability control unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated according to a result of the determination by the update determining unit.

9. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein the reliability control unit gradually increases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, in a period of time during which it is determined continuously at a predetermined timing that the contents to be evaluated is updated by the update determining unit.

10. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 8, further comprising an update analysis unit which analyzes whether an update of the contents is intrinsically required or not,

wherein the reliability control unit increases or decreases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to results of the update determining unit and the update analysis unit.

11. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus comprising:

a related-contents acquisition unit which acquires contents related to contents to be evaluated;

an element extraction unit which extracts an element contributing to increase or decrease in a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, by referring to the acquired contents; and

a reliability control unit which increases or decreases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, by referring to the extracted element.

12. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein, in terms of each aspect in evaluating the degree of reliability, the element extraction unit extracts an element contributing to increase or decrease in the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein the reliability control unit increases or decreases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, by referring to the element extracted in terms of the each aspect in evaluating the degree of reliability.

13. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 11 or 12, further comprising a classifying unit which classifies each extracted element into a first group containing elements that contribute to the increase in the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated or a second group containing elements that contribute to the decrease in the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein when the number of elements in the first group classified by the classifying unit is greater than that in the second group, the reliability control unit increases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated.

14. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus comprising:

 a contents acquisition unit which acquires contents containing an item to be assessed;

 a contents specifying unit which specifies own contents serving as an information source of the item to be assessed;

 a consistency determining unit which determines consistency of the item to be assessed in a manner that the specified own contents is compared with contents, in the acquired contents, other than the own contents; and

 a reliability control unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the own contents and a degree of reliability of the other contents, according to the decision made by the consistency determining unit.

15. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 14, wherein when both the degree of reliability of the own contents and the degree of reliability of the other contents are high and the presence of consistency of the item to be assessed is determined by the consistency determining unit, the reliability control unit increases both the degree of reliability of the own contents and the degree of reliability of the other contents.

16. An information search provision apparatus according to any

of Claims 1-15, further comprising:

an access unit which accesses a server by referring to location information indicative of a location of the server open to the public through a web page;

an access determining unit which determines if an access of the access unit to the server is allowed or not;

an access history storage which stores correspondence between a decision result by the access determining unit and timing at which the access unit has accessed the server; and

a timing specifying unit which specifies timing at which the access of the access unit to the server was first successful, by referring to the correspondence,

wherein the reliability control unit starts performing a control of increasing or decreasing the degree of reliability at the specified timing.

17. An information search provision system including a terminal apparatus connected on a network, a server for providing a web page via the network and an information search provision apparatus for collecting contents posted on a web page on the server and providing contents, matching a search conditional statement, among the collected contents as a search result to the terminal apparatus, the information search provision apparatus comprising:

a collection unit which collects contents, to be evaluated, posted on a web page via the network at a predetermined timing;

and

a reliability control unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, depending on whether it is possible to collect the contents to be evaluated.

18. An information search provision system, comprising:

a contents providing apparatus which posts contents to be evaluated, on a web page;

a terminal apparatus which accesses the contents to be evaluated, via a network; and

an information search provision apparatus which acquires a search conditional statement and provides contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result,

wherein the terminal apparatus includes an information transmitting unit which transmits client information associated with the terminal apparatus, and

wherein the information search provision apparatus includes:

an information receiver which receives directly or indirectly client information transmitted from the terminal apparatus that has accessed via the network the contents to be evaluated; and

a reliability varying unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, based on the client information.

19. An information search provision system according to Claim 18, wherein the information transmitting unit transmits, as the client information, information related to access to the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein the reliability varying unit increases or decreases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to a status of access from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated.

20. An information search provision system according to Claim 18, wherein the information transmitting unit transmits, as the client information, information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein the reliability varying unit increases or decreases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to the information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated.

21. An information search provision system according to any of Claims 18-20, wherein when the terminal apparatus has accessed the contents to be evaluated, the contents providing apparatus transmits information on access from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated and/or information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated, from the terminal apparatus to the information search provision apparatus.

22. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus including:

an information receiver which receives directly or indirectly client information transmitted from a terminal apparatus that has accessed the contents to be evaluated; and

a reliability varying unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, based on the client information.

23. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein the information receiver receives, as the client information, information on a status of access from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein the reliability varying unit increases or decreases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to the access status.

24. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein the information receiver receives, as the client information, information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein the reliability varying unit increases or decreases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to the information transferred from the terminal

apparatus to the contents to be evaluated.

25. An information search provision system, comprising:

- a contents providing apparatus which posts contents to be evaluated, on a web page;

- a terminal apparatus which accesses the contents to be evaluated, via a network; and

- an information search provision apparatus which acquires a search conditional statement and provides contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result,

- wherein the terminal apparatus includes an information transmitting unit which transmits client information associated with the terminal apparatus, and

- wherein the information search provision apparatus includes:

- an information receiver which receives directly or indirectly client information transmitted from the terminal apparatus that has accessed via the network the contents to be evaluated; and

- an asset value varying unit which increases or decreases an asset value estimated for the contents to be evaluated, based on the client information.

26. An information search provision system according to Claim 25, wherein the information transmitting unit transmits, as the client information, information related to access to the contents

to be evaluated, and

wherein the asset value varying unit increases or decreases the asset value according to a status of access from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated.

27. An information search provision system according to Claim 25, wherein the information transmitting unit transmits, as the client information, information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein the asset value varying unit increases or decreases the asset value according to the information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated.

28. An information search provision system according to any of Claims 25-27, wherein when the terminal apparatus has accessed the contents to be evaluated, the contents providing apparatus transmits information on access from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated and/or information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated, from the terminal apparatus to the information search provision apparatus.

29. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus including:

an information receiver which receives directly or

indirectly client information transmitted from a terminal apparatus that has accessed the contents to be evaluated; and
an asset value varying unit which increases or decreases an asset value estimated for the contents to be evaluated, based on the client information.

30. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 29, wherein the information receiver receives, as the client information, information on a status of access from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein the asset value varying unit increases or decreases the asset value according to the status of access from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated.

31. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 29, wherein the information receiver receives, as the client information, information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated, and

wherein the asset value varying unit increases or decreases the asset value according to the information transferred from the terminal apparatus to the contents to be evaluated.

32. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus comprising:

a collection unit which collects contents to be evaluated and contents, other than said evaluating contents, for use in comparison both posted on a web page via a network at a predetermined timing;

an update determining unit which acquires respectively publication circumstances of a decision item involving a provider of the contents to be evaluated, about the contents to be evaluated and the comparing contents and determines if the contents to be evaluated is properly updated, by comparing the publication circumstance of a decision item in the contents to be evaluated with that in the comparing contents; and

a reliability control unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to a result obtained from the update determining unit.

33. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 32, wherein when the decision item has not been posted in the contents to be evaluated at the publication of the decision item in the comparing contents, the update determining unit determines that the contents to be evaluated is not properly updated.

34. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 32, wherein when the decision item was posted in the comparing contents after the decision item was posted in the contents to be evaluated, the update determining unit determines that the contents to be evaluated is properly updated.

35. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus comprising:

a collection unit which collects contents to be evaluated posted on a web page via a network at a predetermined timing;

an identity determining unit which determines the identity of the contents, to be evaluated, collected at different timings; and

a reliability control unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to a result obtained from the identity determining unit.

36. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 35, wherein the identity determining unit determines whether or not the contents to be evaluated collected at early timing is identical to part of the contents to be evaluated at subsequent timing, and

wherein when it is determined that the contents to be evaluated collected at early timing is identical to part of the contents to be evaluated at subsequent timing, the reliability control unit increases the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated.

37. An information search provision apparatus for acquiring a

search conditional statement and providing contents, matching the search conditional statement, as a search result, the apparatus comprising:

a collection unit which collects contents to be evaluated and contents, other than said evaluating contents, for use in comparison both posted on a web page via a network at a predetermined timing;

a uniqueness determining unit which compares the contents to be evaluated with the comparing contents which had already been collected at the time of collection of the contents to be evaluated and determines uniqueness of the contents to be evaluated; and

a reliability control unit which increases or decreases a degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated, according to a result obtained from the uniqueness determining unit.

38. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 37, wherein when the contents to be evaluated is contents such that the comparing contents which had already been collected at the time of collection of the contents to be evaluated is altered, the uniqueness determining unit determines that the contents to be evaluated is not unique, and

wherein the reliability control unit decreases the degree of reliability of the contents, to be evaluated, which was determined to be contents such that the comparing contents is altered.

39. An information search provision apparatus according to any one of Claims 1-16, 22-24 and 32-38, further comprising:

a specifying unit which specifies location information indicative of a location of the contents to be evaluated; and

a reliability transform unit which transforms the degree of reliability, of the contents to be evaluated, increased or decreased by the reliability control unit into a degree of reliability of the location information.

40. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 39, further comprising:

a location information classifying unit which classifies the location information into a plurality of groups each of which belongs to a common attribute; and

a location information group reliability calculating unit which calculates a degree of reliability of location information for each of the plurality of classified groups.

41. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim 39 or 40, wherein the specifying unit specifies a domain name as the location information, and

wherein the reliability transform unit transforms the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated into a degree of reliability of the domain name.

42. An information search provision apparatus according to Claim

39 or 40, wherein the specifying unit specifies an IP address as the location information, and

wherein the reliability transform unit transforms the degree of reliability of the contents to be evaluated into a degree of reliability of the IP address.

43. An information search provision apparatus according to any of Claims 39-42, wherein the reliability transform unit calculates a degree of reliability of an electronic mail address including the location information, based on the obtained degree of reliability of the location information.